

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

ROAD, HARBOR, AND RIVER IMPROVEMENTS.

There is a document printed by the Senate in January, 1847, which does not appear to us as yet to have attracted the degree of attention which it deserves; for it is a document full of most interesting facts. It is a "statement of appropriations for the construction and repair of roads, and for the improvement of harbors and rivers in the United States; showing, as far as practicable, the amount expended in each State."

This statement commences with the year 1806, and enumerates all objects of improvement of roads, harbors, and rivers, and the appropriations in their favor for each year, up to and including 1845, going uninterruptedly through every Administration during that long period of years—a period remarkable for the supremacy of Democratic rule in the Legislative as well as Executive departments. There were occasional interruptions to the system, by Vetoes upon measures which were considered not sufficiently national in their scope, and on that account objectionable. But the system prevailed, and received the sanction of every President during that long period except President HARRISON, who is well known to have been friendly to the system, but whose death occurred within a month after his inauguration.

By referring to this document it appears that the whole amount expended on all these objects during that period, not including expenses of surveys, was \$47,199,223. Of this amount there was expended—

Under Mr. Jefferson	\$48,400
“ Mr. Madison	250,800
“ Mr. Monroe	706,621
“ Mr. J. Q. Adams	2,310,475
“ Gen. Jackson	10,582,882
“ Mr. Van Buren	2,222,544
“ Mr. Tyler	1,076,500

As this period extends through about forty years, it will make the average expenditure on these accounts rather less than \$430,000 the year.

The range of these expenditures—what is, the kind of improvement authorized—can be ascertained by referring to the document, as all are named in it.

The session of Louisiana was not obtained until 1803, nor was the use of steam introduced into our waters until after that time. The war of 1812 gave to us a knowledge which we did not before possess of the value and importance of the Lakes. Florida was ceded in 1819. It was of necessity, therefore, after these events, that the General Government had the information required, and felt the necessity of improving its Western rivers and Lake harbors, as well as the harbors on its west extended line of sea coast. It would have been worse than useless to attempt it before, and singularly unkind of the great and increasing interests of the country to have neglected it after. We accordingly find, after the events stated, and as the Lake and Western river country became known and inhabited, that the system of harbor and river improvements expanded itself. In a word, as the country expanded, as its western regions became inhabited, as its great rivers and lakes and its Atlantic harbors became better known, as its internal and external commerce increased, means of rendering navigation "easy and safe"—a principle adopted by the first law on these subjects of the first Congress of the United States—had to be commensurately extended.

If any one will examine carefully the legislation on these subjects, he will find it to have followed the development of our wants and resources, and to have kept behind them rather than to have been equal to their necessities. The vast and rapid growth of the country has not received the aid it required; but the aid that has been granted by a stinted hand has been more the result of what that growth made necessary than of fostering aid to that growth. And it is now to be seen whether the wants of about ten millions of people, and of an annual trade of about three hundred millions of dollars, can be neglected with impunity by any party or any Executive.

The Senate document to which we have referred gives a synopsis of the legislation by Congress on these subjects from 1806 to 1845. Curiosity and some leisure have induced us to look into the legislation of a previous period, the result of which we shall endeavor to lay briefly before our readers.

The first session of the first Congress was held in 1789. We had then no interior commerce of any account, nor much foreign commerce, all our commercial facilities being confined to a few imperfectly known harbors of the Atlantic. These received lighthouses, buoys, piers, &c., objects which, under the confederation and before the present constitutional government was adopted, were in many cases under the care of the several States respectively. But the constitution, under the grant of power to regulate commerce, made these objects of the care of the National Government. Accordingly, we find all expenses in reference to them as assumed by the National Government, in this very first Congress under the Constitution. The law is dated August 7, 1789. It is in the following words: "That all expenses which shall accrue from and after the 15th August, 1789, in the necessary support, maintenance, and repairs of all lighthouses, beacons, buoys, and public piers, placed or sunk before the passage of this act at the entrance of, or within any bay, inlet, harbor, or port of the United States, for rendering the navigation thereof easy and safe, shall be defrayed out of the Treasury of the United States." It will not, we presume, be doubted that the members of this Congress, consisting chiefly of those who formed the constitution, understood the full intent and meaning of it; and we have from this Congress, the first after the adoption of the constitution, a declaratory act adopting as objects of the care and expense of the General Government all the artificial facilities for our commerce then known to us, and then in use with us, in any inlet, bay, or harbor, on the broad principle of their having been erected for purposes of "rendering the navigation thereof easy and safe." We have therefore, from the very first Congress, the principle laid down for Government action in such cases, namely, that these works shall be for the purposes of rendering navigation easy and safe. The kinds of works enumerated were the kinds known to that time, and were the only kinds that our infant commerce then required. But the principle under which those kinds of works was adapted to commerce as it should expand itself, and is another proof of the prophetic vision of the sagacious men of that day.

This Congress, however, required the cession of the jurisdiction of the sites of the improvements named; but this was found by experience to be an insupportable condition. We accordingly, in the next session, appropriated the lands, although jurisdiction should not be ceded to the United States, and the same in subsequent sessions, until, in

1795, the condition that jurisdiction should be ceded to the United States is virtually abandoned; a joint jurisdiction of the two authorities, State and United States, being considered such a cession of jurisdiction as the declaratory law of 1789 required.

On following this legislation up it will be found that enumerated objects are increased beyond those of the first law of 1789, as "stages," "stake of channels," and "of sand bars;" and, on the 27th April, 1798, a law will be found "to cause the 'channel of Warren river, from Narragansett bay to the port of Warren, in the State of Rhode Island, to be staked out and marked.'" Here, therefore, is a direct case of the improvement of the channel of a river above its bay, and within the interior of a State.

We do not perceive any difference in the power which can erect any kind of work to indicate a channel, a bar, or a rock, and the power to authorize operations for the amelioration of that channel, or for the removal of the bar or rock. It would be singular, indeed, if Congress had the power to erect a lighthouse or beacon, in order to indicate to the mariner a danger to navigation, and yet had not the power to remove the bar or rock, and thereby render the expense of lighthouse or beacon at that locality for ever unnecessary. This distinction of power, however, singular as it may seem, is held by some modern reasons upon the constitution—a distinction unknown to the framers of that instrument, equally unknown to sound reasoning, and disavowed by the practice of the Government from its origin to the present day.

The progress of legislation on these subjects continues to exhibit an extension of objects up to a law of the 3d March, 1801, in which the whole subject is covered by an extremely broad expression. An appropriation is made in this law for lighthouses, beacons, buoys, and public piers, and for "other improvements in navigation." The whole ground is here covered. All that is necessary to make navigation "easy and safe" is here authorized, without reference to locality or to the kind of work.

In 1802 there is the customary appropriation for lighthouses, beacons, buoys, and public piers, and an extension to the additional subjects of "bars and shoals," and for piers in the river Delaware. In 1803 and 1804 the appropriation is limited to that of previous years.

In 1805 we find the customary appropriation and various specific appropriations for similar objects in localities not heretofore named, the wants of which became known as commerce extended itself. The law of this year also contains an appropriation "for erecting public piers in the river Delaware." From 1806 to the present day we have the legislation on these subjects, in the Senate document before noticed, gradually extending under the principle of the declaratory law of 1789 as the commerce of the country extended, and as the country itself extended, and as it became inhabited and better known. These references furnish us therefore with an unbroken series of the most grave and the highest authority, and of the practice of the Government under all Administrations, from the first Congress of 1789 up to and including that of 1845. If, therefore, the practice of the Government from its origin to the present day, under every party, can be considered as settling a constitutional question, we do not perceive how the most fastidious reasoner can longer entertain a doubt of the power of Congress over these subjects, unless, indeed, he be of that incurable class which has respect for no opinions but its own.

During a part of this period, however—namely, from 1798 to 1822—there is an occasional legislation of a different character, which it may be well to notice. We refer to that peculiar legislation which gave the consent of Congress to certain acts of State legislation in reference to tonnage duties for specific purposes. An examination into this legislation can create no other impression than that the consent of Congress is given with reluctance, generally for very short periods, renewed as required at subsequent sessions, and that the objects of the legislation were frequently, and indeed chiefly, as far as the greater number of these acts is concerned, to support health officers to ports, and for sick and disabled seamen. The legislation is evidently a temporary substitute, until Congress could digest and adopt its own course. The latter laws on these subjects also show that the State agents employed had to render their accounts of expenditures to the United States Treasury Department. After 1822 we do not perceive any more of this legislation, or if there be any it has escaped our investigation, and the laws on these subjects for years before 1822 are mere renewals of consent previously given. But, be that as it may, these laws invariably show that the consent of Congress had to be invoked and granted in all cases, and, of consequence, the plan and object had to be such as Congress should approve, as the consent of Congress was given to the law of a State in which the plan and object were exposed. This consent is also frequently accompanied with a statement in the United States law of the object, and always with a special reference to the State law that is approved.

Secondly, the legislation also shows that it was not merely a temporary, but a very limited kind of legislation, a sort of substitute until Congress could act more directly, in which State authorities were made agents of Congress, and were obliged, as consent was renewed, to render accounts of expenditure to the United States Treasury Department. It may also not be out of place to remark that no body of United States Engineers existed till 1802.

One leading principle, unequivocally and without exception, governs the entire legislation on this subject. It is, that, throughout and in every form, the power of Congress was necessary to give validity to the act, or to authorize the expenditure, whether the plan were that of using State authorities as agents or United States engineers. It is in all cases the power of Congress. Now, do we not perceive how it can be so flattering to State pride to be the mere agents of Congress in such matters, or how any one who pretends to reason on these matters can admit the constitutional power of Congress to use State authorities as its agents, and yet not be able to select other agents better adapted for the duties. The question involves a mere choice of agents, and is not a question of constitutional power; or, in other words, it is a mere question of patronage and practicability. For all purposes of improving harbors, rivers, and roads, the agency of States, with right to collect a tonnage duty for such purposes, has been long since abandoned as utterly inefficient and impracticable. And those who desire to return to this limited and partial system either cannot have looked into it, or seek under such a subterfuge to disguise a deadly hostility to these measures of improvement.

The question, therefore, between the two systems (if that of using State authorities as agents, or of limited practice and of such impracticable application, can be called a system) is not a question of power and of right, but one merely of expediency and convenience. The utter impracticability of using the State authorities for harbor and river improvements by a grant of tonnage duties is too apparent and too easily shown to need further remark. It is, in fact, a palpable error, which could not for a moment retain control over any rational mind which was familiar with Government operations. It would be to substitute a cumbersome, partial, local, inefficient, and impracticable system for one that has proved to be simple and direct, national and efficient; and would be a result of the power of Congress in either case, as the constitutional power of Congress over these questions has to be invoked and admitted, whichever agent shall be used.

THE FRENCH QUESTION.

SPEECH OF MR. CALHOUN.

IN SENATE, MARCH 30.

Mr. CALHOUN. I do not perceive the slightest necessity for referring this resolution (proposing congratulations to the French) to the committee, and on that point I entirely concur with the views of the mover of it. The resolution is simple; it requires no examination of details, and the Senate is just as competent to form an opinion of its merits as any committee can possibly be.

I do not intend to enter at present into the great question presented in the resolution. To act upon it now would, in my judgment, be premature. The people of France have done much. They have made a mighty revolution. They have overturned an old and powerful monarchy, and decreed the establishment of a republic. All this they have accomplished in a very short period, without any extraordinary bloodshed or confusion. It is indeed calculated to excite our wonder, and, so far as the aim of the French people extends, our lively sympathy. But the time has not yet arrived for congratulation. Much remains to be done. The real work to be performed is yet before them. They have decreed a republic, but it remains for them to establish a republic. If the French people should stop at this point, and content themselves to be as wise in constructing a proper constitution as they have proved themselves to be skilful in demolishing the old form of government; if they shall really form a constitution which shall on the one hand guard against violence and anarchy, and on the other against oppression of the people, they will have achieved, indeed, a great work. They will then be entitled to the congratulations not only of this country, but of the whole civilized world. But if they fail, what then? What then? Can there be a more important inquiry? If France fail, under what form of government will she find herself? I suppose it will be out of the question to go back to a constitutional monarchy. The Bourbon family, in all its branches, is, I take it, now odious to the French people. They are hardly likely to re-establish the imperial dynasty of Napoleon, and I cannot see the least probability of that. It must be the result if they fail to establish a republic; if it come to contests within, or wars without; if it shall be necessary to resort to force to repress internal discord or overcome foreign assaults—quite a possible case—France may find herself in the embrace of a military despotism. Such a result would furnish ground for congratulation, either on our part or that of the civilized world.

This, indeed, is a mighty movement. It is pregnant with mighty consequences. Whether the result shall prove to be a blessing or a curse to France and the world, depends upon what is coming rather than upon what has been already done. A revolution in itself is not a blessing. The revolution accomplished by the French people is, indeed, a wonderful event in the history of the world, and it may lead to events which will make it a mighty evil. It is, therefore, premature to offer our congratulations merely upon a revolution. We must look to the consequences and the end. We must await the termination of the movement. I wish well to France—sincerely do I wish her well. There is no man that breathes who has a deeper or more profound love of constitutional government than I have—not one who has never known a period when there was so great a necessity for wise, deliberate, cautious procedure. Great events are before us. There lives not the man who can say what another year may bring forth.

I offer no opinion as to the success or failure of the French people in this effort. I see tremendous difficulties in the way of success, and I see no less tremendous difficulties in the way of failure. I see the French people, in my opinion, depend, at least in a very high degree, upon the fact whether she can prevent war, that again depending upon two circumstances: one, whether she may have the self control to abstain from improper interference with surrounding countries; and, secondly, whether they may have the moral and good sense to abstain from any self-assertion. Thus far the leading Power of Europe has certainly displayed great good sense and foresight. Great Britain has done as she ought to have done; and I trust that every other Power in Europe will stand and look on, giving France a fair opportunity to consummate the great work which she has engaged. It is due to France, to the civilized world, and to the cause of liberty, that we should observe strict non-interference. If she succeed, it will be an admission to all Europe that the time has arrived when they must agree to yield to liberty in a constitutional and a stable form. Thence will follow, and freedom and republican institutions become the order of the day. If, on the contrary, standing aloof and avoiding all contest, France shall fall in this great effort, the result will be a new era in the history of other Powers, it will do more to put down liberty under a republican form of government than any other event which could occur.

Now, I think that it is due all round that there shall be a fair trial. The first step to that, in my opinion, consists in looking on and as little interference as possible. To France the people of this country will extend their sympathy; but I do not intend that the Governments themselves ought to be prudent and abstinent in the expression of their sentiments. If we, as a Government, extend our congratulations in this formal and solemn manner, others may take the opposite and denunciatory course; and, between the two, that result will be produced which must inevitably overthrow the revolution—an event to which every one who loves liberty and the rights of man, looking to the interests of France alone, and with the kindest feeling, ought to be cautious and abstinent in making a move. My opinion, then, is, that the wisest course will be to lay this resolution on the table, expressly on the ground that it is premature. The circumstances by which we ought to be regulated in expressing or withholding our congratulations have not yet developed themselves. When these circumstances occur, the time for taking up the subject will have arrived. We know that a National Convention, called by the Provisional Government, is to assemble about the middle of next month.

SPEECH OF SENATOR UNDERWOOD ON THE SAME QUESTION.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. I concur entirely with the remarks made by the Senator from South Carolina; but I voted against his motion to lay the resolution upon the table, because I conceive it placed me in a false position. If we had laid the resolution upon the table it would have been an act from which inferences might have been drawn unfavorable to those who so voted in reference to their sympathy with the great movement which has been made by the people of France, and I am free to admit that my heart is with them in every step which they have taken. I have rejoiced in every movement which the French people have made from time to time with the view to the establishment of a republic. But although these have been my feelings, and now are my feelings, strongly cherished, I am ashamed to caution by the fact that in all their efforts they have signally moved forward. The great danger hereafter admonishes me of the propriety of observing that prudence and caution recommended by the Senator from South Carolina. I think with him that it is wise to await the result of this great movement. If France succeed, her example will be followed, I doubt not, by more than half of Europe. If she fail, not only the chains of monarchy be riveted more closely in Europe, but the great principle of liberty and the safety of republican institutions throughout the world.

Now, what ought to be done? It seems to me, as we are notified through the press that the elections in France will shortly take place, that the national convention will soon assemble, and that, as the result of the deliberations of that body will reach us before we adjourn, we ought to await the result before we express any opinion, and to leave the matter to our opinions. In the mean time it will be quite becoming in us as citizens to tender our congratulations to the French people in this movement. Entertaining these views, and as there is no prospect that we shall obtain the result of the labors of the French convention on or before the day named by the Senator from Ohio, I move to postpone the consideration of the resolution till the first Monday in June.

PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE, Gettysburg, Penn.

FACULTY AND INSTRUCTORS.
G. P. KRAUTH, D.D., President and Professor of Natural and Revealed Religion, Ethics, &c.
Rev. H. L. Baughert, A.M., Professor of Greek Language, Rhetoric, and Oratory.
Rev. M. Jacobs, A.M., Professor of Mathematics, Chemistry, and Mechanical Philosophy.
Wm. M. Yocum, A.M., Professor of Latin, Logic, and Mental Philosophy.
M. L. Hoover, A.M., Professor of History and Principal of Preparatory Department.
David Gilbert, A.M., M.D., Lecturer on Anatomy and Physiology.
John G. Morris, D.D., Lecturer on Zoology.
A. Baskie, A.B., Tutor; J. K. Pitt, A.B., Tutor.

The success of Pennsylvania College has been such as to gratify its most sanguine friends. It is recommended to public patronage by its proximity to Baltimore and Philadelphia, the healthfulness of the place of its location, the morality of the inhabitants of Gettysburg, and the cheapness of living. The course of studies is as extensive and substantial as any of any institution in this country. The Preparatory Department provides for instruction in all the branches of a thorough English business education, in addition to the elements of the Mathematics and Classical Literature.
The annual expenses are—
For board, tuition, and room-rent during the winter session..... \$65 50
For the summer session..... 45 10
Washing..... 10 00
Wood..... 3 00
Total expenses..... 123 60
Board can be obtained in clubs at \$1 per week.
The winter session terminates on the 27th of April, and the summer commences on the 1st of June. mar 25—¹⁸⁴⁸

DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MONDAY, APRIL 3, 1848.

Mr. CUMMINS asked leave to offer the following resolutions: Resolved, That it becomes the people of the United States to rejoice in the sentiment of self-government is commended to the people of the United States, and that the intelligent and thinking men of all intelligent nations Resolved, That the only legitimate source of political power is the will of the people, and the only rightful end of its exercise is the good of the people, and the only rightful end of its exercise is the good of the people.

Resolved, That we sincerely hope that down-trodden humanity may succeed in breaking down all forms of tyranny and oppression, and in the establishment of free and national governments for the good of the governed, and not for the aggrandizement of those who govern.

Resolved, That we tender our warmest sympathies to the people of France and Italy in their present struggle for republicanism, and sincerely hope they may succeed in establishing free and constitutional governments, emanating from and based upon the will of the governed, suited to their wants and condition, and such as will secure to them liberty and safety.

Resolved, That we tender our sympathy and hopes of success to every people who are seeking to establish for themselves free and national governments, and that whatever of blood and treasure may be shed or spent in a struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor, it is to be charged to the unjust resistance of the tyrants, who strive to limit and exercise the rights of the people, usurped against their will, and exercised for the benefit of the few and the oppression of the many, and not to the people, who seek only to regain and exercise their natural rights, which will best secure and promote their own happiness and safety.

The reception of the resolutions being objected to— Mr. CUMMINS moved to suspend the rules to enable him to offer them. This motion was carried in the affirmative: Yeas 121, nays 51.

Mr. CUMMINS moved the above resolutions, which, being read, Mr. HILLIARD hoped that an Executive message just received would be read by general consent.

Mr. HILLIARD moved a suspension of the rules to admit the motion.

The CHAIR reminded Mr. H. that the rules had already been suspended for the purpose of receiving the resolutions.

The resolutions moved by Mr. CUMMINS were again read. Mr. CUMMINS demanded the previous question.

Resolved, That we tender our sympathy and hopes of success to every people who are seeking to establish for themselves free and national governments, and that whatever of blood and treasure may be shed or spent in a struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor, it is to be charged to the unjust resistance of the tyrants, who strive to limit and exercise the rights of the people, usurped against their will, and exercised for the benefit of the few and the oppression of the many, and not to the people, who seek only to regain and exercise their natural rights, which will best secure and promote their own happiness and safety.

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ability their social institutions alluded to in such offensive terms. There is on the part of the South nothing aggressive there is content to sustain the Government as it is; they make no war upon the people or the institutions of the North. But, sir, they observe your movements here with profound interest. They know their rights, and there is throughout their entire bosoms a power to maintain them, with a courage and firmness which nothing can intimidate or shake.

The feeling, then, in regard to the subject which has thus been thrust upon the House so recklessly, is so profound, and well settled, and, to borrow a word of expression from the French, so eternal, that it is impossible to touch it without danger.

I repeat, sir, that in moving to refer the resolutions before us to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, I have no hostile purpose. I desire that when Congress does speak upon this subject, it shall speak in well weighed and becoming terms. I do not like the language of these resolutions. It so happens that we are often called on to vote on propositions suddenly thrown into the House, when we cannot express our own true sense. Let the resolutions go to the appropriate committee, and come back to us in a better form.

Mr. McCLERNAND said, like the honorable gentleman from Alabama, (Mr. HILLIARD), he sympathized with France; like him he objected, and decidedly, to the form of the amendment moved by the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. ASPEN). Unlike the gentleman from Alabama, however, he did not distrust the success of the late movement in France.

Mr. HILLIARD interposed, and the floor being yielded, begged that the gentleman would not misapprehend him as saying that he distrusted the movement. What he had said was, that there were certain indications connected with the movement which were calculated to awaken the apprehension that all might not be as France desired. He, however, hoped all might be as France desired. He cordially sympathized with the people of France.

Mr. McCLERNAND proceeded. Without affirming anything of what the gentleman had said, (Mr. McC.) wished to say that he had confidence, sufficient confidence, in the ultimate success of the great movement in which the French people were engaged.